

St. Helens. On the 18th of May, 1980, Mt. St. Helens exploded with the force of a 24-megaton atomic bomb, scorching 230 square miles of picturesque Northwest landscape and triggered the largest known landslide in history, traveling at nearly 200 mph to bury Spirit Lake and the Toutle River. Tragically, fifty-seven men and women lost their lives, over 200 homes and 180 miles of road were destroyed and caused \$3 billion in damages.

Since that horrific day, the great people of Washington state began the long road to recovery. Today, I would like to recognize the astounding efforts of thousands of volunteers and donations from countless companies that have succeeded in making Mt. St. Helens a place where trees are growing at record speeds and animals are beginning to thrive in their new home.

Mt. St. Helens is now a place where tens of thousands of visitors flock every year from around the globe to witness both the violent and healing powers of nature. Local residents devastated by the eruption have transformed their communities and now look to Mt. St. Helens to attract visitors and contribute to the local economy.

There is still, however, an enormous amount of work to be done to help Mt. St. Helens and the surrounding areas continue on this path to recovery. The local communities' dedication to rebuilding infrastructure and ecosystems, the creation of a renowned research facility, and the construction of a world-class tourist attraction have demonstrated the highest degree of responsiveness and resourcefulness.

I would also like to take this opportunity to commend the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Forest Service for their achievements and commitment in bringing Mt. St. Helens back to life.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, and a member of the Mt. St. Helens Institute Advisory Board, I am deeply committed to helping Mt. St. Helens make the best possible recovery and to finding federal dollars to keep Mt. St. Helens accessible and enjoyable for all visitors and to assist the surrounding communities in finding solutions to their many challenges.

I am confident that in the next twenty years the people of the Northwest will make even greater strides in reviving the beauty of Mt. St. Helens, making Washington state an even greater place to live.●

REFLECTIONS ON THE BOZEMAN DRUG COURT

● Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the innovative work of the Drug Treatment Court in Gallatin County, Montana.

Recently I worked for a day at the Drug Court, where I witnessed the process of evaluating drug court cases and determining who was following the rules—and who was not.

I must say, Mr. President, I was very impressed and inspired by the whole process—Judge Olson, his staff, the prosecutors, defense attorneys, parole and probation officer, counselors. And, most important of all, the people who have voluntarily decided to turn their lives around. This pilot project in Bozeman, Montana should be replicated around the state and nation.

In the morning, I sat in on the briefing, where judges and all the parties involved in sanctioning defendants discussed—with compassion and sometimes frustration—their attempts to help these people get off and stay off of drugs and alcohol.

Their discussions centered not on punishment, but on finding common-sense ways to help these people addicted to drugs and alcohol find ways to improve their lives and be positive contributors to their communities.

And, sitting later in court, I saw the genuine and sincere attempts of the defendants to correct their lives and stay out of jail.

Judge Olson was remarkable. He mixed just the right amount of compassion with tough love to help the defendants.

He counseled them, warned them, cautioned them, and told them he personally would help them find jobs so they could stay “clean.” His work is to be highly commended and copied throughout Montana.

The defendants also showed that they can beat drugs and alcohol. One middle-aged man told me later that the Treatment Court was the best thing that ever happened in his life. He had become clean for the first time in 30 years. He owed his life to the Treatment Court. Now he is trying to find ways to help other people.

The Treatment Court is a success story waiting to be copied. It is a way to keep people out of jail, off the streets and in a job.

Yes, some people slip up and don't abide by the rules. When they do, Judge Olson cracks down on them. But when they succeed, Judge Olson praises them, and shakes their hand.

His personal involvement in the lives of these people shows that justice does know compassion, that courts can be places where people headed for jail can make a detour—and be given a chance to redirect their lives. Mr. President, I want to say that I was inspired by what I saw last Friday in Treatment Court in Bozeman. And I want to help to find funding for the Bozeman Treatment Court, as well as funding for similar courts throughout Montana.

Such an investment in people—in helping them become positive citizens in their communities rather than bur-

dens—will save us money—and lives—in the long run.

And I will also work hard to help the Treatment Court find funds to help defendants locate affordable housing, get a good education and good jobs. What struck me, Mr. President, was that many of the defendants suffered from a lack of education. My work day in Treatment Court reminded of the importance and power of education, as well as the importance of creating good-paying jobs.

Along with families, they are the building blocks of a strong and health society, and help keep people off drugs and alcohol.

Count me a supporter of this successful program.

The treatment court idea embodies steps crucial to curbing the influence of drugs on our society.

Nationally, such treatment courts are a relatively new idea. The first drug courts were created in Florida in 1989, under the supervision of Janet Reno.

She and others realized that the solution to the rising number of drug related cases was not to increase the capacity of the criminal justice system—but to reduce the number of drug users.

The Gallatin Treatment Court is only seven months old. And while its first participants have yet to graduate, based on my experience I believe most will succeed.

Roger Curtiss, who works with the Drug Court and heads the non-profit Alcohol and Drug Services program of Gallatin County, told me how he overcame his own drug addiction problems after being placed in a similar program.

I also learned what a dedicated and talented staff Roger has supporting him in his efforts to reduce the scourge of drugs.

I remain committed to fighting illegal drug use in Montana. While I believe that treatment courts such as Gallatin County's will play an increasing role in the fight against drugs, other steps must be taken.

In January I invited drug czar Barry McCaffrey to Montana for a conference. He spoke to dozens of Montanans about the challenge posed by methamphetamine and other drugs.

One experience sticks out in particular. At the town hall meeting we had a man named Wayne approach the microphone to address the group. He fidgeted as he told his story about being addicted to meth for nearly 20 years. He said, “People don't understand the affect of this drug. It tears the brains up. It rips the family apart. It has a hold that never lets go.”

Mr. President, Wayne is not alone. Across Montana and rural America, meth and other drugs are tearing families—and communities—apart.

In January the DEA reported that eighth graders in rural America are 83